

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Washington Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Christian Science Monitor _____
New York Daily News _____
USA Today _____
The Chicago Tribune _____
Date 8 SEPT 1991

Acting CIA Chief Unfazed By Controversy

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Central Intelligence Agency, under fire for new revelations about its role in the Iran-Contra affair, will weather the latest controversy, said acting agency director Richard J. Kerr.

The spy agency is currently "under a fair amount of fire," Kerr acknowledged in a weekend speech to a group of retired intelligence officers.

"My view is that's not unique," Kerr said in the Saturday speech, noting that such controversies had flared since the World War II days of Office of Strategic Services, the CIA's predecessor.

The agency draws fire from time to time because "it is willing to step out and take chances ... It is willing to put its own people in jeopardy. It is a courageous organization today as it was earlier," Kerr said.

Kerr's speech came just a day after a federal grand jury indicted Clair George, the agency's former No. 3 official, on charges of lying to three congressional panels about his knowledge of the Iran-Contra affair.

Another top CIA official, Alan Fiers, pleaded guilty in July to two misdemeanor counts of misleading Congress. And the question of how deeply the agency was involved in Iran-Contra is likely to figure prominently in confirmation hearings this month for Robert Gates, President Bush's nominee to head the CIA.

"We are always walking a rather thin line between success and failure because we are involved in taking risks," Kerr said. "And (the agency) is going to remain that way if it's going to be effective."

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 The New York Times _____
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 Date 3 Sept. 1991

Kerr Becomes CIA Chief—Temporarily

■ Deputy Director of Central Intelligence Richard J. Kerr became the agency's acting director yesterday, replacing William H. Webster, who announced in May he was retiring.

CIA spokesman Peter Earnest said Kerr will serve until a new director is confirmed by the Senate.

Webster, a former federal judge and director of the FBI, headed the CIA for four years and ended 26 years of government service Sunday.

He had been due to leave at the end of July to return to private law practice, but stayed on at President Bush's request after the Senate delayed confirmation hearings for his designated successor, Robert M. Gates. The hearings were postponed while the Senate intelligence panel considers information regarding Gates's role in the Iran-contra affair.

The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times _____
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 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Christian Science Monitor _____
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 The Chicago Tribune _____
 L.A. Times p. A30
 Date 30 Aug 1991

Deputy CIA Director to Take Over From Webster Next Week

From Associated Press

WASHINGTON—Richard J. Kerr, the deputy director of the CIA, will take over next week as acting director to replace William H. Webster, who is retiring from government service, the agency announced Thursday.

The CIA public affairs office said that Kerr will become acting director on Monday and will serve until the new director is confirmed.

Webster announced his retirement in May and said he would leave the agency at the end of July to go into private law practice. But he extended his service, at the request of President Bush, after the Senate held up confirmation of his designated successor, Robert M. Gates.

The Senate Intelligence Committee, which was supposed to start confirmation hearings on Gates on July 15, postponed them until Sept. 16 to pursue new information regarding Gates' role in the Iran-Contra affair.

Kerr, 55, became deputy CIA director when Bush named Gates as his deputy national security adviser in January, 1989.

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 Date 30 AUG 1991

CIA Names Richard Kerr Acting Director
 By JIM ABRAMS
 Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Deputy CIA Director Richard J. Kerr will stand in as acting director until the Senate, diverted by the Iran-Contra affair, confirms a replacement for outgoing agency chief William Webster.

The CIA public affairs office said Thursday that Webster's delayed retirement after four years at the helm will become official on Sunday and Kerr will take over as acting director on Monday.

Webster announced in May that he was retiring from government service at the end of July to go into private law practice. President Bush, however, asked him to remain a little longer when the Senate postponed until Sept. 16 confirmation hearings on designated successor Robert Gates.

The Senate Intelligence Committee was supposed to start those hearings on July 15, but put them off to pursue new information regarding Gates' role in the Iran-Contra affair.

Kerr, 55, became deputy CIA director when Bush named Gates as his deputy national security adviser in January 1989. He will be acting director until Webster's replacement is confirmed.

Kerr was previously considered a longshot among potential candidates to succeed Webster.

Gates' confirmation was snagged by testimony from former CIA officer Alan Fiers, who pleaded guilty earlier this month to two misdemeanors in connection with the diversion of Iran arms sales profits to the Contra rebels in Nicaragua.

Fiers said he reported the diversion to three of his superiors, one of whom told him to withhold the information from Congress. During some of that time, Gates was deputy director to William Casey, although Fiers did not say that Gates was aware of the illegal activities involving the Contras.

Gates became acting director of the agency in December 1986 when the late CIA chief became too ill with a brain tumor to work. He served in that post until Webster became agency director in the spring of 1987.

Kerr as well has been mentioned in Iran-Contra documents. Records show that former CIA analyst Charles Allen told Kerr in August 1986 that he suspected Iran was being overcharged for the weapons it was buying from the United States and the profits were being used to arm the Contras.

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Kerr told congressional investigators in 1987 that he passed Allen's concerns to Gates, who asked to be kept informed. Gates, according to the report of the congressional Iran-Contra committees, said he didn't remember the conversation with Kerr. Allen subsequently sought out Gates directly in October 1986 and passed on his suspicions, both have testified.

Kerr became the head of the agency's intelligence analysis directorate in April 1986 when Gates was promoted to deputy CIA director.

He was born in Fort Smith, Ark., grew up on the West Coast, graduated from the University of Oregon, and joined the CIA in 1960 as a military analyst.